(b) the details of the agencies by whom the wheat was imported alongwith the details of the prices on which the wheat was given to various Government and private undertakings; and

(c) whether any kind of irregularity has been noticed in this regard and if so, what action has been taken with regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) There was no import of wheat during 2005-06 on Government account. Orders were placed for import of 55 lakh MTs of wheat in 2006-07 out of which 54.54 lakh tonnes has been delivered upto May, 2007.

(b) The wheat was imported by the State Trading Corporation of India Ltd. during the year 2006-07. The prices at which wheat is allocated to Government and other agencies by the Department of Food and Public Distribution are given in the enclosed Statement (*See* below).

(c) No, Sir.

Statement

Prices at which wheat is allocated to Government and other agencies by Department of Food and Public Distribution

Name of the Scheme	Rate (Rupees/Quintal)
Above Poverty Line (APL)	610
Below Poverty Line (BPL)	415
Antyodaya Anna Yojana	200
Mid Day Meal	415
National Food for Work Programme	415
Nutrition Programme	415
Welfare Institutions & Hostel etc.	415
Annapurna	415
Nutritional Programme for Adolescent Girls	415
World Food Programme	415
Sampoorana Grameen Rojgar Yojana	At Economic Cost
Village Grain Bank Scheme	At Economic Cost
Defence/PMF	At Economic Cost

Mechanism to provide foodgrains to poor persons at affordable rates

566. SHRI RAJ KUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of CONUSMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is considering winding up PDS;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the mechanism proposed to be evolved to make foodgrains available to poor and BPL persons at affordable rates?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Diversion of foodgrains

567. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL:
SHRI RAJ KUMAR DHOOT:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that PDS grains worth Rs. 31,500 crores were stolen during the last three years and poor are being cheated by diverting 53 per cent of wheat and 39 per cent of rice meant for them;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof, State-wise, cost-wise, year-wise indicating loss suffered by Exchequer;

(c) whether his Ministry has enquired into this matter, and if not, what are the reasons therefor;

(d) whether vigilance committees have, so far, been set up in all States to check pilferage/diversion of PDS grains in the country, if so, the details thereof;

(e) the action taken against the culprits; and

(f) the steps taken to prevent recurrence of such fraudulent acts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) to (c) No, Sir. The Department of Food and Public Distribution got TPDS evaluated by ORG MARG. This evaluation covered the period of 2003-04 and 2004-05. The report received in 2005 mentioned that 39% of rice and 53% of wheat was being diverted.

This diversion was because of inclusion errors, leakages through ghost ration cards and pilferage during transportation and from Fair Price Shops. State-wise details of diversion reported by the evaluation study of ORG MARG are enclosed as Statement-I (*See* below).

These figures of diversion reported by the study were contested by most of the State Governments. Also diversion of rice and wheat from BPL to APL family does not meant loss of the foodgrains. It results in delivery of foodgrains to unintended category of beneficiaries. Therefore, estimation of exact loss could not be made After this study, State and UT Governments have taken a number of steps to check leakages and diversions. Therefore, it cannot be presumed that the same level of diversion has continued in subsequent years.

After receipt of this report, a nine-point action plan was evolved in consultation with State and UT Governments. This Action Plan is under implementation since July, 2006. A copy of this Plan is enclosed as Statement-II (*See* below).

(d) Status of Vigilance Committees set up in different States is enclosed as Statement-III (*See* below).